

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

- Claims 3-5, 7-11, 14-16, 18-22, 24-26 and 28-32 are pending in the Application after entry of this amendment.
- Claims 1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 17, 23 and 27 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer by Applicants.
- Claims 3, 7, 14, 18, 24 and 28 are currently amended by Applicants.

Claim Amendments

Applicants thank the Examiner for identifying allowable subject matter in the present application. The Examiner has noted that Claims 3-5, 7-11, 14-16, 18-22, 24-26 and 28-32 are allowable but are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants have amended Claims 3, 7, 14, 18, 24 and 28 to include all of the limitations of the rejected base claims. Claims 3, 14 and 24 are now independent claims for their respective dependent claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the current amendments overcome the Examiner's objection and that all pending claims are now allowable. Applicants have cancelled Claims 1, 2, 6, 12, 13, 17, 23 and 27 without prejudice or disclaimer.

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PATENT

Application No.: 09/676,364

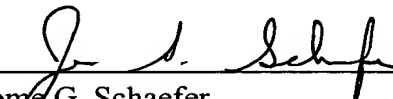
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Conclusion

In view of the above amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application in a state of allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that a Notice of Allowance be issued with respect to all pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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